

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 664
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of a true Tennessee hero,
Major General Hugh Barbee Mott of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Major General Hugh Barbee Mott of Nashville, an American legend and a true hero of Tennessee ; and

WHEREAS, a modest and gracious gentlemen throughout his lifetime, Major General Hugh Barbee Mott proudly served this nation with the utmost courage and dedication, displaying his bravery and valor on the field of battle where he rightfully earned the thanks of a grateful nation; and

WHEREAS, born in Nashville on August 14, 1920, the son of John R. and Ruby Cleveland Mott, Hugh Barbee Mott was a 1939 graduate of East Nashville High School where he served as Captain of the Reserve Officer Training Corps; he also attended the Marion Military Institute in Marion, Alabama, a preparatory school for all the military service academies, where he focused on attending West Point; and

WHEREAS, recognized as a diligent young man with a tremendous work ethic, Hugh B. Mott was selected for a job as a Rodman with the United States Corps of Engineers by the legendary General Bob Neyland and worked on the Wolf Creek Dam from August 1940 until January 1941; and

WHEREAS, as the dark clouds of war swept over the European continent, young Hugh Mott gained employment at the Vultee Aircraft plant in Nashville, January 1941, working as many as seventy-eight hours a week as a stock chaser, expediting the transfer of parts within the departments as the company raced to build dive bomber aircraft the Allies would desperately need; and

WHEREAS, as the winds of war came to America, Hugh Mott enlisted as a private in the United States Army on November 1, 1942, receiving his basic training at Fort Eustis, Virginia, specializing in Anti-Aircraft Artillery; he was promoted to Corporal before shipping out to Camp Davis, North Carolina, on March 1, 1943, to attend Artillery Officer Candidate School; and

WHEREAS, upon completing Officer Candidate School, Corporal Mott was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on June 3, 1943, remaining as an instructor at the facility until February 10, 1944, when he transferred to the Engineer branch and attended Engineer Basic Officer Course at Fort Belvoir, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of engineering school on March 24, 1944, Second Lieutenant Mott was assigned as a Platoon Leader in the 9th Armored Division Engineer Battalion at Camp Polk, Louisiana; as combat engineers, Second Lieutenant Mott and his company were responsible for working directly with combat troops in numerous capacities, from construction and repair of roads and bridges to the demolition and deployment of mines, explosives, and assorted booby traps; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Mott departed for Europe on August 20, 1944, to take part in the liberation of France from the German occupying force, Second Lieutenant Mott landed at the beach in Normandy on October 9, 1944, prepared to engage the enemy and assist the Allies in liberating France, Belgium, and the Netherlands; and

WHEREAS, as the Allies began moving east across France in October 1944, Second Lieutenant Mott saw action, engaging in fierce combat in the Battle of the Bulge, as eventually the Germans lost ground and retreated into Germany, destroying bridges and crossing over the Rhine River to halt the American advance; and

WHEREAS, on March 7, 1945, First Lieutenant Hugh Barbee Mott, promoted in February 1945, a young man of only twenty-four from Nashville, Tennessee, would achieve everlasting military fame and universal acclaim as the Hero of the Remagen Bridge; and

WHEREAS, on that fateful day, First Lieutenant Mott, with the help of two reliable soldiers, Sergeant Eugene Dorland and Staff Sergeant John Reynolds, were called on to prevent the destruction of the Ludendorf Railway Bridge over the Rhine River at Remagen, Germany, which had already been weakened by German soldiers through a series of explosive charges, artillery, and mortar fire and was rigged with explosive charges, set to detonate; and

WHEREAS, given the order to proceed, First Lieutenant Hugh Mott heroically led his team as they raced across the entire length of the bridge, cutting the wires leading to a multitude of explosives charges, all while under intense fire from snipers, machine guns, and 20mm guns as they secured the bridge at Remagen; and

WHEREAS, in the middle of the bridge, Lieutenant Mott discovered four packages of TNT weighing 30 pounds each, as well as one 600 pound charge rigged to explode, which his team quickly disabled thus ensuring the security of the bridge; and

WHEREAS, after the demolitions were disabled, Lieutenant Mott heroically led his platoon, under heavy sniper and machine gun fire, to patch a gaping hole in the bridge planking, working frantically on their hands and knees, to repair the damaged bridge allowing tanks to cross, thus ensuring the Allies an eastern foothold on the Rhine; and

WHEREAS, the skill, speed, and boldness of their successful mission won resounding congratulations and praise from high-ranking military officials; General Dwight D. Eisenhower was reported to be jubilant, and he sent sincere congratulations; General Omar N. Bradley said, "...this bold advance, characterized by able willingness to chance great risks for great rewards, speeds the day when our full forces can come to grips with the enemy."; and

WHEREAS, for this heroic act, First Lieutenant Hugh B. Mott was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, which commendation cited his "unhesitating action and cool courage" amid intense enemy fire aimed directly at him; officials at the time said that the war was shortened by about six months due to his action, perhaps preventing 5,000 to 10,000 Allied casualties; and

WHEREAS, he was feted for this accomplishment throughout the years, and on the tenth anniversary of the capture of Remagen Bridge, President Dwight D. Eisenhower received all winners of the Distinguished Service Cross, including Hugh B. Mott, and established the Society of Remagen Bridge, making Mott, Dorland, and Reynolds charter members; on the twenty-fifth anniversary, General William Westmoreland hosted a luncheon in their honor in the Chief-of-Staff's dining room at the Pentagon; and

WHEREAS, after the battle at Remagen Bridge, First Lieutenant Mott continued to fiercely engage the German Army, pressing into Germany, fighting in the capture of Limberg, Frankfurt, Leipzig, and heading into Czechoslovakia just before V-E Day; at the end of World

War II, First Lieutenant Hugh Mott was assigned to the Engineer Battalion of the 90th Infantry Division and served in the Army of Occupation as a platoon leader and company commander until returning to the United States in 1946; he was separated from active military service on June 9, 1946, and entered the Reserves, having attained the rank of Captain; and

WHEREAS, returning home to Tennessee after the war as a highly decorated soldier and greatly admired individual, Hugh Mott was soon called on to run for public office; he won election to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1948, and served from 1949 to 1951; and

WHEREAS, in 1949, Mr. Mott was appointed Treasurer of the city of Nashville by Mayor Tom Cummings, a position in which he would serve with distinction for nineteen years during the tenures of both Mayor Ben West and Mayor Beverly Briley; and

WHEREAS, joining the Tennessee National Guard on March 15, 1949, Captain Hugh Mott was assigned as operations and training officer of the 173rd Armored Group in Jackson, Tennessee, promoted to Major on April 1, 1950, and in 1952 was appointed Operations Officer of the 173rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, soon becoming the Executive Officer for the 2nd Battalion of the 173rd Armored Cavalry Regiment until October 1954, Major Mott became Battalion Commander of the 175th Tank Battalion, 30th Armored Division, and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in February, 1955; and

WHEREAS, on December 6, 1959, Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Mott was named Commanding Officer of Combat Command B, 30th Armored Division and promoted to full Colonel in December 1959; he was later appointed Chief of Staff, 30th Armored Division, and served in that position until January 1, 1964, when he became Assistant Division Commander, 30th Armored Division; and

WHEREAS, after receiving Federal recognition as Brigadier General of the line on April 28, 1964, Hugh Mott was elected president of the National Guard Association of Tennessee and appointed Commanding General of the 30th Armored Division in April of 1968; he earned his second star on June 28, 1968, as a Federally recognized Major General; and

WHEREAS, from April 4th to 14th, 1968, Brigadier General Hugh Mott gallantly commanded Task Force Bravo, over 3,300 guardsmen, during civil disturbances in Nashville

following the assassination of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, miraculously without loss of life; General Mott heroically led guardsmen, City Police, and State Troopers into Tennessee's A and I University dormitories, while under fire, to search and confiscate weapons and tools used to set fire to the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps building; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 1968, Major General Hugh Barbee Mott was named Adjutant General for the State of Tennessee by Governor Buford Ellington, simultaneously acting as Commander of the 30th Armored Division until February 1969; Major General Mott worked tirelessly as Adjutant General, a post he would hold until May 26, 1971, during a period of intense civil unrest; and

WHEREAS, Major General Hugh Barbee Mott was released from the Tennessee Army National Guard on May 31, 1971, but, from May 1, 1975, through August 31, 1975, General Mott selflessly returned to temporary active duty to assist the National Guard Directorate in representing the Director at Major Command's Annual Training Periods; and

WHEREAS, returning to Metropolitan Nashville/Davidson County Government, General Mott served as an assistant to Mayor Beverly Briley and oversaw the police, fire, and civil defense units of the city prior to being named Metro Chief of Police in 1973 by Mayor Briley; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Chief of Police, General Mott conducted a reorganization of the police department, and implemented innovative policies, procedures, and equipment, including the use of police dogs, a new tactical squad, helicopters, motorcycles, and the development of a new training academy before retiring from service in 1975; and

WHEREAS, in November 1975, Major General Hugh Mott honorably returned to inactive status and retired from the Army National Guard on July 2, 1978; and

WHEREAS, for his courageous military service, General Mott was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three bronze stars, Army of Occupation Medal (Germany), World War II Victory Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Tennessee National Guard Commendation Ribbon, Tennessee National Guard Distinguished Service Ribbon, and the Tennessee National Guard Service Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, on October 11, 1995, the United States Congress held a rare joint Senate-House meeting in the chamber of the House of Representatives to honor World War II veterans,

and those who served on the home front; Major General Mott was honored by Congress at the ceremony for his heroism; and

WHEREAS, in tribute to Major General Mott, the U.S. Army Engineer School, located at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, named "Mott Hall" in his honor; the Bachelor Officers Quarters building presents to the visitor a handsome portrait of General Mott with an impressive display of his World War II exploits; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his lifetime of gallant and resolute service, the Tennessee National Guard has chosen to name the state building known as Joint Force Headquarters, Tennessee Military Department, at 3041 Sidco Drive in Nashville, the "Major General Hugh B. Mott Tennessee National Guard Headquarters" as a lasting tribute to this true Tennessee hero; and

WHEREAS, a life member of the American Legion, Major General Mott held numerous offices over the years, including tenures as Commander and fulltime Adjutant of Post 5, in addition to being a past Chef de Gare of Voiture 702, La Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux; he was also a member of the Armor Association, Tennessee Reserve Officers Association, Legion of Valor, and the National Guard Associations of the United States and Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, an active member of his community who was involved in numerous charitable events and organizations during his lifetime, Hugh B. Mott took great pride in contributing his time and immeasurable talents to the Boy Scouts of America for many years; he served as Chairman of the Middle Tennessee Council's Watauga District and received both the Long Rifle and Silver Beaver awards for his efforts on behalf of the Scouts; and

WHEREAS, Hugh B. Mott was a devout member of Riverwood Church of Christ, where he faithfully served his Lord and Savior for many years; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by two daughters, Cathy Martin and Judy Mott, Hugh Barbee Mott is survived by his devoted wife of sixty-four years, Mildred, his daughter and son-in-law Susan and Steven Coles, five grandchildren, Christy Wilson, Chad Mott, Bess Coles, Jackie O'Keefe and Zach York, and four great-grandchildren, Kensley O'Keefe, Abigail O'Keefe, Amy Scurlock and Blaine Perkins; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly should pause to honor the peerless qualities and remarkable life of such a distinguished soldier, public servant and human being; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Major General Hugh Barbee Mott and pay respectful tribute to his impeccable character, indomitable courage, and steadfast commitment to his country, his State, and his fellow man.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of General Mott .

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.